



NER Appropriations Subcommittee Presentation

February 10, 2011

What Regional Councils Do in NC

- REGIONALISM PIONEERS

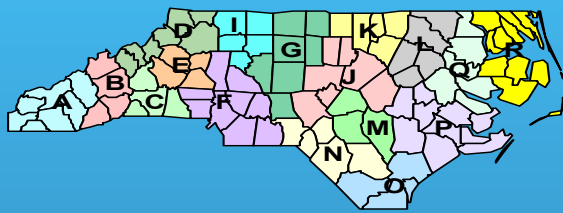
- Authorized by NC General Assembly in 1969 to bring counties, towns and cities together to address common concerns
- COGs have served as the LEAD regional planning & development agencies in NC since that time
 1. MEMBERSHIP IS VOLUNTARY
 2. BOUNDARIES REQUESTED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THEMSELVES
- They serve as the “front line” for providing infrastructure, workforce development, rural transportation planning, economic development planning and other quality of life improvements in their regions



What Regional Councils Do for NC Contd.

- All 17 administer the Aging Programs in NC
- 12 are federally designated Economic Development Districts by EDA...2011 will collaborate with NCDOC to use EDA & HUD \$\$ to develop a statewide Comprehensive Economic Development Plan that can also serve as a “blueprint” for state & federal funding allocations.... coordinating resources, reducing duplication and creating efficiencies
- 14 Prepare and administer the Community Development Block Grant(CDBG)and Housing programs

Comprehensive Services



- Helping local governments confront economic & environmental issues by providing effective regional action on issues bigger than any single government can address on its own
- Securing funds for sound economic & community development
- Promoting intergovernmental cooperation between local, state & federal governments
- Assisting local governments in meeting state & federal regulations and mandates
- Planning, securing, managing and delivering federal & state services to local governments

Distressed Communities

“You can pretend to care, but you can’t pretend to be there!”

Many organizations bring resource teams to these communities....then they go home.

- Regional Councils provide the technical assistance and leadership needed to improve local conditions and build momentum to help restore hope in distressed communities
- Many Tier 1 counties lack the manpower and skill sets required to organize allies and develop and implement strategic plans.
- The expertise and willingness of the Regional Councils to step in and provide these services is crucial to the “rebuilding” of these communities
- State funding is used for this technical assistance to struggling communities!

Accomplishments

- For over 40 years the councils have provided coordination and facilitation of federal & state programs across the state at the regional level. Examples include:
 - Aging Programs
 - Workforce Development
 - Economic Development Planning
 - Infrastructure:
 - Transportation Planning
 - Water Resources Planning and Deployment
 - Energy Planning
 - Housing and Weatherization
 - Community Planning (trails, greenways, etc.)
 - Revolving Loan Funds for Business Development
 - Disaster response

Accomplishments Contd.

- GIS Mapping Services
- Local Watershed Planning & Environmental Reviews for Water Quality
- Grant administration for local governments
- Data management for the State Data Center
- Technical assistance for DENR
- Brownfield redevelopment
- Conducting workshops and training for Cooperative Extension

Boards & Performance Measures

- Regional Councils are governed by their local, elected officials and are held accountable for effectiveness by their individual boards
- Boards normally meet monthly and, generally, are not compensated for meeting attendance.
- **The Councils are held accountable by the Local Government Commission and NCGA and must comply with all their regulations**
- The Councils are also held accountable by state and federal agency regulations.....they have been around for over **40 years providing dependable service to their member governments**

Use of State Funds

- State funds are used for technical assistance in communities across the state. Individual line item budgets are in the full report. State funds are expended annually and do not cover the full cost of technical assistance.
- Cash on hand information is in the Request For Information from NER Committee Staff.
- Administration averages between 12 and 15% of each Council's total budget
- Compensation for the top 5 Directors: \$145,000; \$137,000; \$124,000; \$115,956 and \$116,779. Lowest \$81,148
- Statewide approximately 525 people work in Regional Councils. They are funded with a combination of membership dues, federal funds and/or specific grant programs
- Employees are offered health care insurance, life insurance, vacation and holiday compensation and retirement

State Funding for Regional Councils

- Each of the seventeen (17) COGs received less than \$25,000...total state expenditure in 2010: \$425,000
- This funding has decreased 60% over the last decade... and/or diverted to other organizations, non-profits outside the local regions
- However, even with a very small amount of state funding they have leveraged over **\$102 MILLION** for their counties and towns.
- State funding is critical for technical assistance across the state and for leveraging other resources, particularly during this economic crisis when local governments are as strapped as they have ever been!

Summary

- Regional Councils have been an intricate part of government services in North Carolina for 40 years
- They operate efficiently and manage to leverage every dollar for their member governments
- They provide and implement critical services to their member governments for the people of NC
- They have focused their efforts on “being a part of the solution” to get North Carolina’s economy and financial position in recovery. (*Inter- Regional Cooperative Agreement*)
- They provide “creative regional solutions” to today’s challenges and are dependable partners for our local governments

Conclusion & Questions

- Regional Councils assure technical assistance for the local governments that are least likely to survive shifting markets, unemployment and shrinking revenues for community stability
- Regional Councils remain the closest entities to local governments and are the “cutting edge” providers of creative solutions to address local issues within a regional context
- **Call on Regional Councils to help you find creative solutions for statewide issues facing North Carolina. They have a 40 Year Track Record of Success and they stand ready to help!**